

capsules

THE CURRENT LITERATURE IN BRIEF

FIP by Breed & Characteristics

Previous studies have reported FIP to be more common in purebred cats. While the relative prevalence of FIP in cat breeds has been reported, specific breed predisposition has never been statistically evaluated. This study sought to determine whether breed predisposition exists. The authors identified all cats diagnosed with FIP at a veterinary teaching hospital over a 16-year period. Breed, sex, and reproductive status of all cats were reviewed. Of the 11,535 cats that had been examined during the study period, 60 (0.52%) had a final diagnosis of FIP. Purebred cats were significantly more likely to have a diagnosis of FIP: 1.3% of the purebred population was affected versus 0.35% of the mixed-breed population. Breeds with a significantly higher risk for prevalence of FIP included Abyssinians, Bengals, Birman, Himalayans, ragdolls, and rexes. Breeds not at increased risk (i.e., prevalence not significantly different from mixed-breed cats) were Burmese, exotic shorthairs, Manxes, Persians, Russian blues, and Siamese. Twenty-three additional cat breeds had an FIP prevalence of zero. One other breed in the study period, Havana brown, was represented by 2 infected cats; however, the small number precluded statistical analysis. Both male and female sexually intact cats were significantly more likely to be diagnosed with FIP. Males and young cats also had a higher prevalence of FIP. The authors note that multivariate analysis, including populations from multiple primary and referral facilities, would be necessary to definitively define individual breed susceptibility to FIP. However, the results of the current study could be useful when prioritizing differential diagnoses in sick purebred cats.

COMMENTARY: A higher prevalence of FIP has been suspected in purebred cats. This retrospective article suggests that young, intact, male or female cats, and Abyssinian, Bengal, Birman, Himalayan, ragdoll, and rex cats are at higher risk for developing FIP. Because development of FIP appears to be related to an abnormal host immune response, it is conjectured that there may be genetic susceptibility in these breeds. Further investigation is recommended as this study was conducted with a biased population from a VMTH, and medical records were reviewed rather than histopathologic reports. Factors other than breed and genetics could result in an increased frequency of FIP in purebred cats. These include potential increased exposure to the virus because purebred cats are more likely to be raised in catteries and an increased willingness of purebred cat owners to seek advanced veterinary care.—*Ralph E. Barrett, DVM, Diplomate ACVIM*

Prevalence of feline infectious peritonitis in specific cat breeds. Pesteanu-Somogyi LD, Radzai C, Pressler BM. J FELINE MED SURG 8:1-5, 2006.